

Dear Federal Communications Commission:

I am disturbed by your efforts to extinguish the independent ISP. Despite the claims of the phone companies, competition is not as healthy as they may lead you to think. Satellite internet is not a solution. The speeds are laughable and reliability poor. Wireless internet is not available in my area. I have yet to hear of any plans by Pacific Gas and Electric to implement broadband-over-power-lines. Comcast, my local cable company, still does not offer internet access at my location, despite constant advertisements in the mail saying otherwise. This is in the San Francisco Bay Area.

DSL is my only option for high-speed internet. Let me present a small anecdote:

SBC is my phone company. For two-and-a-half years, I had DSL service from them. Then, around August 2003, the reliability of my connection became so sporadic as to make it unusable. A call to SBC's support desk proved to be no help, no matter how many times I may have called. They simply offered bogus excuses that it was my fault, that it was my computer, or that it was the internal wiring in my house. None of these were true, because I had both replaced the DSL modem myself, and all three of my computers had the same problem, and it all started at the same time.

So, since SBC refused to fix a DSL connection I was paying fifty dollars a month for, I decided to put my money where my mouth is, and switched to a local ISP that actually worked for its customers. Based in Santa Rosa, CA, Sonic.net was an outstanding ISP who, when a problem arises, will work day and night with SBC to get it fixed, without one excuse.

Now, my point is that if you allow phone companies to lock smaller ISP's out of their networks, you will end all broadband competition in my area. This competition allows me to pay less, get better service, and support a company that cares about its customers, as well as what they do. This is the point of competition, and isn't something to be put to a stop.